

A Letter From Father Francis



My Dear Friends in Christ,

July and August are traditionally the months when people take vacations. For most of us, a vacation involves a *going*, a journey, a trip of some kind. An important part of a vacation

is *leaving the familiar*, the place where we usually live and work, and heading off to a different place. There is always something exciting about setting out on such a journey. There are other journeys in life that are not of our choosing in quite that way. These are passages we make because, at some level, we feel we must make them. Something within us moves us to a certain path, to head out in a certain direction. Even though we sense the journey may be difficult, and we may have all kinds of hesitations and reservations about it, nonetheless, we know we have to set out on this path if we are to be true to ourselves.

Yes, we choose to make such a journey, but it is a choice in response to what seems like a call from beyond ourselves or from deep within ourselves. Such a journey is put before us in today's first reading. Amos, according to himself, was a shepherd and a dresser of sycamore trees in the southern kingdom of Judah. Yet, at a certain moment in his life, he felt under compulsion to make a difficult journey into the Northern kingdom of Israel in order to preach the word of God there. It was a most unlikely journey for the likes of Amos to make, and Amos was well aware that it would be no holiday. Yet, he also knew that this was a journey he simply had to make. He spoke of this compulsion in terms of God's call: 'The Lord took me from herding the flock and said "Go".' Amos went because he had a strong sense that he was being sent. Similarly, in the gospel, the disciples set out on a journey because they are sent on that journey by Jesus. They set out freely, but in response to a call, a sending.

The experience of Amos and the disciples can be our experience too, setting out on a journey not completely of our choosing. It says that God wants us to live in a certain way, to live our life's journey as Jesus did. We often make all kinds of journeys of our own choosing, whether vacations, business, or other trips. There is a sense in which we try to allow God to guide us to take certain paths and to avoid others, moving us in one direction rather than another. Although God has chosen this journey for us 'before the world was made', according to St Paul, God wants us to also choose this journey for ourselves and waits for us to do so. This is not a choice we make once and for all; it is one we are constantly reshaping. All our lives we can keep on choosing to surrender to God's purpose for us; we keep setting out on the journey God is calling us to take; we keep

inviting God to have his way in our lives, saying with Mary, 'Let it be done to me according to your word.'

If we keep choosing the journey that God has chosen for us in Christ, responding to God's call, this will impact the many smaller journeys we take in life. It will influence our vacations for example. We will choose to vacation in genuinely recreational ways, that help re-create the image of God's Son in us. We will relax in ways that are life-giving for ourselves and others, in ways that help us to become more fully the person God wants us to be.

See you at Mass!
Father Francis

P.S. THANK YOU!

I want to thank our Eucharistic Ministers for their time talent and dedication to St. Pius X Parish. Eucharistic Ministers or **Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion** are called by God to become servants to other followers of the Body of Christ. The function of an Extraordinary Minister is to assist the priest in distributing the true presence of Christ to other members during the sacrifice of the Mass

A great celebration of the Eucharist requires the dedication of many people serving in liturgical ministries. Thank you for your dedicated service in ministering the Lord's Body and precious Blood to the faithful. Eucharistic Ministers are also asked to bring Holy Communion to people within the parish community who are sick and/or homebound. The experience of bringing the Body of Christ to others, who cannot attend mass due to illness or other limitations, is truly a gift from God. Your involvement in both liturgical ceremonies and outreach to the homebound plays a vital role in the life of our parish. It's essential to realize that your contribution to this ministry transcends mere practical assistance to me and Deacon Rick. Thank you, thank you!

